THE BETTER WAY

By

GERDA GRASS.

I.

"I wonder if this work of hers in the slums is more than a pose, a pretty affectation?" mused the Rev. Ambrose Power at his writing desk. "Those soft brown eyes she has are the exact color of her father's, and a more selfish, more silky, more cold-blooded man, I'll venture, never trod shoe leather. And those sweet ways of hers, half shy, half trustful—of course, they're a mere clever trick of coquetry. We impecunious curates are considered fair game, I fancy, by these elegant young ladies. Not that I am so very impecunious, to be sure, but"—with a shrug of his shoulders—"so far as the daughter of Mr. Delling is concerned I am a hopeless ineligible indeed. It is perfectly safe to flirt with me. I could not have the effrontery to take it seriously."

But his scornful lips quivered suddenly and softened, his gray eyes darkened, his fine face grew infinitely tender.

"Oh, why do I try to cure myself," he said, aloud, "by these disloyal thoughts? Because she is a star out of my sphere, must I try to blur her brightness? She is all she seems—a dear, sweet, unaffected, noble girl. But," he ended, taking up his quill abruptly, "she is more in my thoughts than is good for me. I will answer this letter of hers about the Play Guild, and then—think of something else."

The letter finished, he took it up and looked it over, half-amused, half-dismayed.

"Looks a bit shaky, eh? Bah! What a fool I am! She'll never think of it. I've no time to write another. I must go and see old Widow Bell, poor broken derelict, and, oh! as many of them as I can. What a Christmas some of these poor souls will have! If there were a few more helpers like Miss Delling we might get some of these awful places cleaned up by the day of judgment. Well, well! This Play Guild idea of hers is very good. It has answered splendidly in some parts of London. I don't see why it shouldn't answer here. What a marvelous girl she is! She seems to be as much in the swim as anybody, and yet she has always time to think out schemes of this sort."

He pocketed his letter, and getting up strode out of the room into the hall, snatched his hat from its peg, clapped it on, and, with more energy than grace, swung himself out into the street. At the corner he posted the letter.

His way took him into the town, and walking rapidly along the electric-lighted pavement he found himself suddenly face to face with Miss Linda Delling—the queen of his foolish heart! A shop assistant was carrying small parcels into her carriage. With eyes beaming radiantly through her black chenille-spotted veil she came towards Ambrose with outstretched hand.

"Oh, Mr. Power," she cried, delightedly, "I have been wishing to see you. I have something to show you." She took a folded paper from her muff and flourished it before him.

He took it and opened it. In sprawling hieroglyphics was written:

"I hereby sertifies that i will not tech strong lickers no more.—Yours truly, Robert Jugg."

Ambrose handed back the document.

"I am very glad for Jugg, Miss Delling," he said, a little sadly, "and very sorry for myself. What is it I am wanting in? Tell me the secret of your success. I have been at this same poor Jugg—oh, times without number. And Jugg has politely informed me— But I am keeping you?"

"No, no, indeed. I am most glad to have met you, if only to wish you a happy Christmas when it comes. And, oh! would you mind giving this"—a soft gloved hand stole into his and left a coin—"to poor Mrs. Jugg. Her husband was in all the time, and I'm afraid my faith in him has not got backbone yet. So I dared not give her anything before him. Oh, did you get my letter? Have you found me any children for my Play Guild?"

"I have scores for you, Miss Delling."

"Oh!" She gave a pretty start of assumed alarm. "I hope we shall be equal to them all, poor little things. Thank you very much for getting me such a nice large room, piano and all. It will do splendidly, and I have got a lovely Christmas tree for it already. I am going away to-morrow for a fortnight's visit to some friends, but I shall be at liberty at once when I come back. My father is going to Nice, by the way. He detests our English Christmas. Isn't it odd? I love it. And now, good-bye. I hope you will have a very happy holiday."

So with mutual good wishes they parted.

"A happy Christmas for me!" said the Rev. Ambrose, gloomily, in the privacy of his heart. "Ah, that is very likely! Perhaps—if I had never met Linda Delling. But now the best will always be wanting. I hope she will meet her fate this holiday. I wish she would get married. I should have to forget her then. Jugg is more in her thoughts than I am."

It was a cloudy night, with promise of snow. Not a star was to be seen. Coming out from the lively, brilliantly-lit streets straight into utter gloom and solitude Ambrose Power crossed over, and, opening the railway gates, passed over the row of lines that divided prosperous, respectable Port Rushborough with its glittering shops, its fine houses, its pretty ladies and elegant gentlemen, from the collection of slums known as the Old Town.

Here, amid the murkiness and filth, amid the noise of coarse laughter and quarrelsome oaths, a barrel-organ was grinding out the last strains of "Ora Pro Nobis." Close upon Piccolomini's solemn melody came the frolicsome trills and runs of a gay, new-fangled dance. Tattered little girls left their corners swiftly, chose other tattered little girls for partners, came out into the middle of the road, and there stood waiting with nodding heads to catch the time, and then began to dance. Merrily their rags danced too. Ambrose stood and watched them with a tender pity, heedless of the whispered jeers about him, till leisurely a policeman sauntered up and waved a hand majestically. Without a murmur the crowd of little dancers melted away. The "bobby" was part of the programme.

"For its size," mused Ambrose, as he picked his way, "Port Rushborough has managed to collect a marvelous lot of vice and filth, and—organ-grinders. One finds these dancing groups in every dirty little street, and always an ogre in blue pouncing down on their fun. I suppose this is what has made her think of a Play Guild. Poor little souls! They need a refuge for their harmless frolics badly."

II.

Drumming his taper fingers impatiently upon a small table beside him, Mr. Delling looked out upon his spacious grounds, covered now with some inches of snow, and, with a rare moodiness in his handsome, velvety brown eyes, awaited the home-coming of his only daughter, Linda, from her fortnight's Christmas visit in the country.

"It's odd!" he mused. "Linda and I have been the best of friends always, and yet—I don't know her in the least. I haven't the faintest notion how she will take it. H'm!"

He began to pace the beautiful room fretfully, and then, with a sudden return of his ordinary philosophical calm, he sat down at the keyboard of the grand piano and began to weave soft, dreamy melodies that were reminiscent of bits of Verdi and Mascagni, but which he was placidly convinced were quite his own.

Fascinating beyond description—for what pen could tell how mellow was his voice, how winning were his ways?—gallant with women, cordial with men, Geoffrey Delling was yet, in his sixtieth year, the idol of Port Rushborough's mushroom society. But little above the middle height, he was inclined, though quite becomingly, to the plumpness of good living and an indulgent conscience. Brows and mustache still wore their original hue, but his raven hair had rapidly turned snow-white. Thick, and fine, and wavy, it had, however, suffered no loss of beauty from the change, and his soft brown eyes but shone the darker for the contrast. He had an effective tenor voice, was a delightful dancer, a very artist in water colors—behold his moonlight scenes and storm-tossed vessels here upon the richly-papered walls—he was devoted to horticulture; his orchids and Malmaison roses will never be surpassed; and, having traveled much, he had a marvelous store of anecdote and scenic description wherewith to employ his confident tongue. He was an ideal host, an ideal guest. His father, a prosperous shipbuilder of humble origin, had seen with some disappointment that nature had clearly intended his younger son for merely ornamental purposes; but, with the philosophy of a practical man, he had made the best of the matter and had helped him to make the most of his aptitude for drawing-room accomplishments. Dying, he had left Dellingholme, with a substantial income, to Geoffrey, and the shipbuilding business to his elder son, Bert, a beetle-browed, energetic pushful young man who, ere his fortieth year, had become the leading shipbuilder of the north, and a famous matador of finance. Lucky, plucky, determined and ambitious, Bert Delling was the idol of the workingman, as his brother was the idol of society, and had been literally thrust into Parliament by an admiring populace and subsequently knighted.

The brothers were the poles apart. The life of the one was work, work, work, with little thought of pleasure—of the other pleasure, pleasure, pleasure, with never a thought of work. Even in his music Geoffrey Delling was dreamy, sleepy, languid.

He paused now in his twilight melodies with his fingers on the keys, and for some moments sat lost in thought. Then, with a sudden feeling of triumphant confidence in his fortunes, he dashed abruptly into one of his rare bravuras.

So magnificent, so brilliant was the music that he did not hear the crunch of the long-expected wheels on the snow, did not hear the melodious, happy voice of his daughter as she got out of the carriage with her maid, did not hear her hail the log fires in the hall with a glad compliment:

"You dear, delightful, dancing flames. It's been a delicious fortnight—never a happier, but no fires are like our own, are they, Alice? East or west, home is best. Take my muff, please. I'm going straight in to my father. And, Alice, lay out my violet velvet. It is my father's favorite."

And so overwhelming was the brilliant noise that Linda, standing on the threshold of the drawing room, now wrapped in darkness save for the flickering firelight, fell back in sheer alarm.

"What! All in darkness, father?"

"Here at last, then! Touch the button, Linda."

A flood of electric light, rose-shaded, dispelled the darkness and revealed to the one his lovely daughter, elegantly clad in crimson gown and sealskin coat, with smart fur toque lit up with crimson quills, and to the other her handsome father, wearing now his usual indulgent smile. She had only come in for his kiss of welcome, and, having received it on red, happy lips, went out at once to dress for dinner. He did not like to be kept waiting.

A little later she came into the dining room, looking exquisite in the violet velvet that showed up her milk-white skin with its peachy tints on cheek and chin, and her mass of wavy red-gold hair.

"What a winter, father!" she exclaimed, as she seated herself. "We got snowed up at a little junction, though not so badly but that we soon were on our way again. How the poor will suffer if this lasts, with coals at their present price! I never sit down to a feast of good things"—her eyes grew grave as their gaze traveled over the flower-decked, glittering table—"but I almost feel ashamed. So many have barely a crust of bread, and we have—everything. Often I am checked in the very midst of enjoyment, in the very midst of thinking how good life is, by a swift remembrance of the other side of the medal."

"My love," returned her father with his pleasant smile, "you are quite Egyptian in your lugubrious table sentiments. There is a very pretty skull in some corner or other of the library which you would like to have before you as you eat. Shall I send for it?"

Linda blushed a little, but laughed good-humoredly.

"How you tease me, father! But, indeed, I quite deserve it for my stupidity in regaling you with such doleful talk."

She could not expect him, she thought, to feel as she did for the hardships and sorrows of the poorest poor. He had never seen one of these hideous, joyless hovels. He was a man of fashion. Solicitude for the submerged tenth was left, she mused a little sadly, to women and—curates. So she dismissed her somber thoughts and applied herself to the pleasant task of amusing her father with descriptions of the people she had met and of the pleasures she had shared.

Dinner over, Mr. Delling passed his arm affectionately round his daughter's slender waist, and, leading her to a palm-decked alcove in the drawing room, stood silent till she had settled herself among the silken cushions. Then he seated himself before her, and, with eyes fixed gravely upon her face, took her slim fingers in his own.

"My love," he said, slowly, "I did not want to spoil your appetite—and mine—by referring to the matter earlier, but—I have bad news for you."

III.

"Bad—news!"

"My dear, compose yourself, I beg. To agitate oneself has never yet been of the slightest use. Yes—bad news! I am in low water, Linda, in very low water, indeed. My means are exhausted, Dellingholme is mortgaged for every penny of its worth, and the fellows are dunning me right and left. They will give me no more time. There is nothing for it now, my girl, but—the Bankruptcy Court."

"Father!"

In spite of his philosophical advice, she was agitated beyond measure. She had risen; her face was utterly bereft of color; she was trembling from head to foot.

"Father! Father! How has this happened?"

He shrugged his shoulders half-impatiently.

"What is the use of going into details, Linda? You have no head for such things. Indeed, I have none myself, which is partly the reason. I suppose for this—h'm—misfortune. We have been living above our means, of course, and then, too, a couple of years ago I made some unfortunate speculations."

It was not necessary to explain that the unfortunate speculations had been made on the roulette table of Monte Carlo out of sheer caprice.

His daughter stood motionless like a statue of despair.

"And I—I have been playing the Lady Bountiful in the slums," she said, blankly, "on money that belonged to other people. I have been giving the children summer holidays in the country and May-day feasts, and—oh, father!" her voice broke and tears welled up. "It is too cruel!"

"Such misfortunes happen every day," he murmured.

"Dellingholme is ours no longer," she almost whispered. "Grandfather's house! And he must have been so proud of it. Father, why did you let me go to this great party—get all these expensive gowns?"

"Because, my dear child," he answered, in his smooth, mellow tones, "I wanted my daughter to have as much amusement—be as well dressed as any other. Because I am a weak father, I daresay. Perhaps, also," his voice for a moment took a harder ring, "because I hoped you would make some use of your splendid opportunities. Sir Everest Hardy's son is no—"

"Don't, father," she broke in, clapping her hands to her ears. "He has never been a moment in my thoughts—never will be. But, oh!" she looked at him with searching curiosity, "how strong you are, father. How calmly, phisosophically you can take this horrible calamity. I—I am heartbroken!"

Then suddenly Mr. Delling rose, whipped from an inner pocket a large blue envelope, and, taking from it a letter, flourished this before her.

"Dry your eyes, my daughter," he said, with dramatic solemnity, choking back a sob of emotion. "It is your unfortunate father only who is poor—a bankrupt! You, my Linda, are—an heiress!"

"What!" She stared at him incredulously. "I? An heiress! Whose heiress?"

"Read this," he said. "It came two days ago, and as I saw it was a lawyer's letter I took the liberty of opening it. Your godmother, Mrs. Tempest, has been true to her threat, has disowned that foolish nephew of hers for his insane marriage and has made you, my dear, the heiress to a very pretty fortune."

She took the letter and slowly read it through. Yes, it was here in black and white. She was an heiress. Her father's eyes, fixed searchingly upon her face, saw the color return. He held out his arms.

"Come, my love," he said with a coaxing smile, "and let your poor father have a kiss from his lucky daughter."

Somewhat coldly she suffered herself to be embraced, then freed herself.

"Why have you frightened me so, father?" she asked indignantly. "What was your reason? How could you do it? What fear is there now of the bankruptcy court? Dellingholme will be ours again and every debt be paid."

"Nonsense, child!" he answered, testily. "My affairs must take their course. With my debts you have nothing at all to do. Certainly you may pay off the mortgage on Dellingholme—it would be a very sensible investment—but as for the other matters—nonsense! There is no law——"

"Law? I have never thought of law. The law of right is enough for me. Do you mean that, having actually the money with which to pay them, we are to—to cheat these people who have trusted us?"

He halted in his fretful pacing and his fine eyes were aflame.

"You use pleasant words to your father, Linda. What I want to ask you is this: Do you imagine for a moment that if you spend this fortune of yours—a happy windfall, I must say—on paying debts which need not concern you in the least there will be anything left on which to keep up Dellingholme?"

"Oh, no," she answered a little sadly. "I have some small notion of arithmetic, father. Dellingholme when I have paid off the mortgage must be let and we must take a smaller house and try to be as happy there. Or perhaps for its name's sake Uncle Bert would buy Dellingholme. It would leave me a little more money."

"A little more money!" cried her father, scornfully. "Do you know what you are contemplating? These debts, if you are fool enough to pay them, will swallow more than three-fourths of your fortune! You will leave us paupers, Linda!"

"Come, come, dear father," she answered, gently. "Not paupers, dearest. It is not so bad as that. What should we have done if no fortune had been left to us?"

"Don't worry me with 'if's,'" he retorted, fiercely. "Do you think I have not had enough of worry?"

He had flung himself into an easy chair, and with head thrown back stared up with angry eyes at the magnificent ceiling with its Cupids and roses. Softly his daughter came towards him, and, dropping on a knee beside him, laid loving arms about his neck.

"Dear father," she said, "you have not thought over this calmly and kindly. This fortune must not be misused. The fact that Lance Tempest is most wicked with his money convinces me that it is meant for nobler uses. Honestly to pay the debts we have brought upon ourselves—aye, though it brought us to the workhouse!—and afterwards to try to profit by the bad scare we have had, this is the better way. We shall be at peace with ourselves, and true friends will not——"

He released himself abruptly from her arms and rose.

"You talk," he said, with icy coldness, "like a most excellent copybook, Linda, or like a sentimental, frightened schoolgirl. I had hoped you were a woman of the world. When you find you have made a considerable drop in the social scale—for bankruptcies are forgotten when you get on your feet again, but poverty that lasts is not—when you find yourself refusing brilliant entertainments because you can give none yourself, when you have had brought home to you all the losses that it means, you will regret this absurd ultra-conscientiousness of yours. I advise you, think it over. Not every day does a fortune drop from the clouds. Be a woman of sense. You are as fond of luxury and pleasure as ever I have been."

With dignified scorn he strode to the door, but there the dignity vanished, and Linda Delling, standing rooted to the spot with consternation in her eyes, heard, for the first time in her life, her father slam the door.

Gone now was the glamour of his beauty, his mellow voice, his polished geniality. She felt herself orphaned, desolate, utterly forsaken.

Then out of the misty emptiness rose another face—a kind, earnest, sincere face—the face of Ambrose Power.

"He is one of the truest men in all the world," she said. "And he would say I have done right."

IV.

Yes, her father was right. She loved luxury and pleasure—loved glitter and gladness; loved to go yachting with a troop of friends; loved to see new scenes, wonderful landscapes, magnificent cities. So much the more could she feel for lives unchangeably sordid, bare and dull. So much more did the sights and sounds and smells of slumdom offend her pampered senses. But her heart was brave and generous and paid no heed to their protests.

From a schoolroom not far from the Old Town sounded a very happy noise composed of the merry tinkle of a piano, the rhythmic stamp of some scores of little feet, the bee-like hum of half-loud voices.

Softly the Rev. Ambrose Power opened the door and looked in. Yes, the Old Town had, alas, its brutal men, its frowsy women still; but here, at least, was a goodly portion of its children, their faces scrubbed by half-scornful, yet not unwilling, mothers, till now they shone like glass, save where the "tide-mark" parted clean face from dirty throat. Some of them with prouder parents wore gay ribbons in their hair and gaudy beads about their necks. But all of them wore fastened at their heads bright paper flowers that deft and dainty hands had fashioned. And all of them were happy.

For these were living flowers—forget-me-nots, violets, buttercups, daisies and primroses. There were garden flowers, too—roses, lilies, pansies, pinks and gorgeous sunflowers. But wild flowers and garden flowers were quite at peace together, and, hand-in-hand, with quite wondrous grace, they danced towards, each other, and swinging round with now and then a rhythmic click of heel and toss of toe, blew merry kisses each to each at pauses in their song.

Ambrose Power seated himself unmarked on a bench beside the door.

"It goes extremely well," he commented, pleased. "What an angel she is!"

The melodies, too, were hers. Like snow-white butterflies her twinkling fingers chased each other across the keys. She had all her father's musical skill, with a more original fancy. And this pantomime of song and dance was called "The Meeting of the Flowers."

But now one of the queens of the guild caught sight of Ambrose, and, the music happening to end just then, came rapturously toward him.

"How sweet of you to come and see us. Have you been here long? Don't they dance well? If only they were properly washed."

"I don't think it matters, does it?" said Ambrose, smiling. "The aim so far is just to make them happy for an hour and teach them gentler games. And you have admirably succeeded."

"Oh, here is Mr. Power! How dear of him! Have you been here long? Did you see them dance? Don't they—"

"Mr. Power! This is too charming of you. How do you do? Celia, here is Mr. Power. Isn't it too sweet of him?"

"How do you do, Miss Flashington?" said Ambrose, his head beginnig to swim. "And why do not the queens wear flowers?"

"Oh, Mr. Power! Paper flowers? It would be too absurd."

But where there is a will there is a way. The Rev. Ambrose Power had freed himself in a most polite but eely fashion from the bevy of gushing beauties, and was now alone with Linda.

"Are you pleased?" she asked. "Don't you think they look happy?"

"Indeed I do. And I marvel at their skill."

"Oh, they go to 'penny hops,'" Linda informed him. "And those who don't learn from those who do. They have told me quite a lot of their little secrets."

"I suppose they have. You have the gift of sympathy, and children are quick to find it out. But let me offer you my warmest congratulations, Miss Delling, on the fortune which I understand you have inherited. That it will be nobly used, I know."

She looked into his ardent eyes with a little smile.

"Thank you, Mr. Power. You are good to me. But the fortune will be mine a few days only. Let me tell you the truth. I have been helping my father to be very extravagant, and most of my money will be swallowed up by the appalling debts we have incurred. It is a shameful confession, but the truth. I am not a rich woman any longer, Mr. Power, indeed, almost a poor one. But you may congratulate me all the same, for I feel that God has been most good to me in sending me this fortune that I never dreamt I needed."

But Ambrose Power stood mute. A sudden flush rose to his brow. The barrier, then, was gone!

"The carriage is coming for you, I suppose, Miss Delling?" he asked, in a hoarse voice that he scarcely knew himself.

"Oh, no. My father does not like—I mean we never have the horses out in snowy weather."

"I see." Ambrose smiled a little. How careful he was of the horses. And how loyally she stood by him. Her debts, indeed! "Then I may have the pleasure of seeing you home? I see the others are getting ready."

She would be very pleased. None of the others were going her way. The flowers had been put away, the children had donned their battered hats and tattered capes, the ladies their cozy furs. In a dream Ambrose heard their voices. They were gone. The caretaker had come in and was sitting on the bench Ambrose had vacated. A moment later and the lights were out, and they two were crunching along the white streets together.

They were more silent than was the wont of either, and so it came to pass that it was at the very doors of Dellingholme that had once so awed his love that Ambrose told Linda the secret he had kept so long. And at the very doors of Dellingholme he was made happy.

The pretty wedding has just taken place, and the presents Sir Bertram Delling, M. P. for Coleborough, made to his "dear niece" were not only a very substantial cheque indeed, but also the deeds of Dellingholme.

[Copyright, 1902.]

He—My dear, what would you think if I should say that you were a harp of a thousand strings?

She—Probably I would think you were a lyre.

OUT OF THE ORDINARY.

The City of Mexico, with a population of nearly 370,000, still has an annual death rate of 52.2 per 1,000.

Meteors which reach the earth almost invariably contain a large quantity of iron and a smaller amount of nickel.

The world has six lakes more than 20,000 square miles. The Caspian is the largest of these and Lake Huron the smallest.

The largest parliament in point of numbers is the Hungarian House of Magnates, which has 751 members. England comes second with 670.

Chinamen are the merchant seamen of the future, says a consular report from Shanghai. Over 1,500 British vessels entered the port last year manned by Chinese crews.

Workmen's clubs are being extensively boycotted by brewers in the north of England. The reason assigned is that such clubs attract custom from the tied public houses.

Banana bread is now on sale in some places. It is made of bananas dried and ground down into flour, and is considered twenty-five times as nutritive as ordinary white bread made of wheat.

The growth of Dawson City is indicated by the fact that the First Methodist Church of that city has called to the pastorate the Rev. James Livingstone, of Windsor, Ontario, at a salary of $3,000 a year and a parsonage.

A mother of eighteen children told a Hull (England) jury that she had no idea that roast beef and potatoes, on which she fed her six-months-old baby, would do it any harm. She had fed all her children that way. Eleven were dead.

American ginseng is worth, wholesale, $4 to $6 a pound in Hong-Kong. "Sang" is considered a necessity by the well-to-do Chinese, who use it for a stimulant, and attribute to it many medical virtues. Korea sells to China about $350,000 worth of it each year.

Another meritorious so-called modern invention—the water-tight bulkhead—is now attributed to Chinese experience. In a paper presented to the Institute of Marine Engineers the use of the bulkhead principle on Chinese junks from time immemorial was pointed out.

The Chirkau Scerif, or Hall of the Holy Garment, is the most sacred place in Turkey, for it shelters the mantle of the prophet Mohammed, his staff, his saber, his standard, and, among other relics, two hairs from his venerable head, which are inclosed in a casket of gold.

The value of coal mined in Japan is almost equal to that of all other minerals combined. It varies from the hardest anthracite to peat, but the quality is usually inferior to that of American coal. Modern machinery and methods have been introduced in the operation of many mines.

The throne room of the Sultan at Constantinople is a gorgeous sight. The gilding is unequaled, and from the ceiling hangs a superb Venetian chandelier, the 200 lights of which make a gleam like that of a small sun. The throne is a huge seat covered with red velvet, having arms and back of pure gold.

Engineering estimates that the population of the United States and its dependencies now exceeds 84,000,000 inhabitants. The Philippines contain more than 7,000,000 inhabitants, Porto Rico has 953,000, Hawaii 154,000 and Alaska 63,592. China stands first in population, the British empire second, Russia third and the United States fourth.

Upon the graves of the dead in the Turkish cemeteries little vessels of water are placed for the benefit of the birds, and some of the marble tombs have basins chiseled out for the same purpose, the superstition being that birds carry messages about the living to the dead, and, like everbody else in Turkey, are suspected of being spiteful unless something is done to curry their favor.

The aborigines of the Malabar islands employ a perfect whistling language by means of which they can communicate with each other over long distances. A stranger wandering over the islands is frequently surprised to hear from a hilltop the sound of loud whistling, which is quickly repeated on the next hill, and so is carried from summit to summit until it dies away in the distance.

According to an old document just discovered in Australia gold was first found by a convict near Parramatta in 1789. The unfortunate fellow was at once charged with having stolen a watch and "boiled it down," and, being convicted by the rude court of those early days, was given 150 lashes for his pains. In later years the record of this incident was closely examined by an undoubtedly competent authority, who was quite convinced of the genuineness of the convict's story.

The transplanting of big trees on the world's fair site at St. Louis is an interesting work. A deep trench is cut around the tree four or five feet from its base, and the earth dug away beneath. Then a huge truck is backed up to the tree and securely fastened. The entire tree, forty or fifty feet high, is then tipped over on to the truck and another pair of wheels attached in front. Then, with sufficient teams to pull the heavy load, the tree is drawn to the place where wanted and restored to an upright position. Much care is required in the work, and the trees will receive constant attention until again well rooted.

One Thing We Don't Make.

Kansas City Journal.

"There is one thing which American manufacturers have not been able to produce with any degree of success so far, and that is embroidery," said E. P. Bowman, a New York embroidery salesman, yesterday.

"About all the embroidery used in America is manufactured in Switzerland. It is easy to comprehend why Americans cannot produce what is known as 'hand-made goods.' The women of Switzerland make this work by hand, and the value that is placed upon their labor is so small that it would be impossible for the American woman to exist upon it. There is, however, a large amount of embroidery sold in America which is made by machinery in the factories of Switzerland. I do not understand why that class of goods could not be made here as well as there, but I suppose that the labor proposition is equally responsible for this as it is with the hand-made goods."

SPHINX LORE

Enigmatic Knots of Odd and Ingenious Kind for the Leisure Hour.

[Any communication intended for this department should be addressed to E. R. Chadbourn, Lewiston, Maine.]

89.—INDUSTRY'S EMPIRE.

90.—HOMONYM.

This ancient tavern boasts a ghost—
A former landlord, they inform us—
Who walks, as is affirmed by most,
In penance for his bills enormous.
The house was full election night,
And one *********, all undaunted,
Proposed to tenant, if he might,
The room by the *** ****** haunted.

A dim form glided through the room—
It entered not at door or casement—
Faint footfalls sounded through the gloom;
They should have filled him with amazement.
And yet he laughed at morning tide.
When eagerly his friends received him;
"Well, did the ghost appear?" they cried,
"O, rats!" said he—and they believe him.
M. C. S.

91.—LIBRARY PUZZLE.

(Fill the blanks with writings of the authors indicated.)

My dearest (1) ******* (Owen Meredith) and I had quarreled, and I was in consequence one of (2) *** *********** (Hugo.) It was night, and from one of (3) ** ***** ******* (Lowell) I could look out across the dark water where (4) ** ******* ** *** *** (Hugo) were bringing home fish which were the result of (5) *** **** **** (Kipling), and from another I could look out (6) ******* *** **** ********* (Stanley) to (7) *** ********** *** ****** ***** (Parkman), at least in imagination, and could almost hear the old cry (8) ********, **! (Kingsley) from the emigrants' lips. I felt that (9) *** ****** (Churchill) in our love affairs had come, and I was determined to know whether there was any hope that we might be (10) ********* (Scott), so that I should one day call her mine (11) ** **** *** ** **** (Johnston.) But I who had faced the savage glance of (12) *** **** ** *** ******** (Cooper) felt that I should quail before (13) * **** ** **** **** (Hardy) and fail to show (14) *** *** ***** ** ******* (Crane) before a miss dressed (15) ** **** ****** (Black.) So I determined to pour out (16) * ****** ********* (Shakspeare) on paper, instead of complaining to my sweetheart by word of mouth. I cried to my Irish lad, "bring me a (17) ********* (Thackeray) and then carry my letter where I bid you." When my letter was ready I said, "Now, (18) *** (Corelli), see that you skip as lively as (19) *** ******* **** (Twain), and if you fail to hand this into the very hand of (20) *** **** (Page) herself your griefs will be sharper than (21) *** ******* ** ******* (Goethe), or even (22) *** ******* ** ***** (Corelli.) She lives in (23) *** ***** ** ***** ****** (Hawthorne) just beyond where (24) *** ***** (Tennyson) widens into (25) *** *** ******* **** (Riley) before it turns the wheel of (26) *** **** ** *** **** (Elliot.) I will see that you have due (27) ************ (Emerson.)"

Now I am enjoying (28) *** ********* ** **** (Campbell), believing my suit will prevail, and yet with misgivings, as her father is proud, an (29) ******** ********** (Crawford), with (30) ***** ************ (Dickens) of getting into the House, if not even being (31) *** ******** ******* (Trollope) from Virginia. But if I lose her it will be (32) ******** **** (Milton) to me.
DOROTHEA.

92.—CHARADE.

ONE rush last night of pinions sweeping by,
And Winter passed with grimmest retinue!
He holds his court where Arctic skies imbue
The flashing snows with tropic brilliancy,
And orange morns with crimson sunsets vie.
The wizard-king has left his daughters three,
And grants to each ENTIRE the regency;
His daughters three, like those our Shakspeare drew;
Fierce are the eyes of March, as Goneril's eyne,
April, like Regan, falser is than fair;
True as Cordelia's smiles, May's glances shine;
Ermine is left with those, and jewels rare,
TWO to his youngest, May, gives power to free
The flowers they leave in drear captivity.
A. L. S.

93.—NUMERICALS.

1. The bells ringing 1-2 3-4-5-6-7 and tower 1-2-3-4-5-6-7 us to go to church. 2. The soldier 1-2 3-4-5-6 number three seems 1-2-3-4-5-6 upon his work. 3. Nearly every 1-2-3-4-5 being can try to 1-2-3 4-5 easy tune. 4. 1-2-3-4 5-6-7 a cruel act when she tortured the 1-2-3-4-5-6-7. 5. 1-2 3-4-5-6 cases the 1-2-3-4-5-6 thoughts of the heart are not revealed to others. 6. The 1-2-3 4-5-6 a piece of meat belonging to the 1-2-3-4-5-6. A. C. L.

94.—ANACROSTIC.

Of lowly origin was he,
Born in the depths of poverty,
Leading a life of earnest toil,
Axeman and tiller of the soil,
Noted for honesty and truth,
COMPLETE grew up to age from youth.
He mastered law and rose to power
In his loved country's darkest hour.
Nobly the Ship of State he sailed,
And angry waves, to sink her failed.
Lightened of not a single spar,
At last he brought her through the war.
Raising his hands to bless her foes,
Martyred, he, to his Maker, rose. T. H.

95.—TRANSDELETION.

(Example: Broad, road, ado, do, O.)

Sextus Appius, ONE of ancient Rome, attended the TWO games one day, hoping to meet his friend Flavius, who had promised to help him in his candidacy for the office of quaestor. Sextus did not stand any too well with his party leaders, and, as a sort of THREE, he carried with him a heavy bag of EIGHT, which Flavius had assured him would be necessary for the successful conduct of the campaign. Flavius's honeyed words acted like a SEVEN on Sextus, and for a few days he dwelt in a fool's paradise. Imagine, therefore, his rage when one fine morning he opened the Rome Gazette to NINE the news, and saw, under the FIVE of "Our Next Quaestor," an account of the nomination of Flavius for the office. Sextus was a man of strong passions. He believed not in FOUR friendships, but loved or hated with all the fervency of a virile mind. Flavius's treacherous SIX embittered him greatly, and when asked whether he would support Flavius for the sake of party harmony, he said, "ELEVEN, TEN, not while there are independent voters in Rome," and he straightway organized the first Allied Third Party. AMARANTH.

96.—RIDDLE.

I'm a little, short-lived, brilliant thing,
But, oh! much trouble I sometimes bring!
Folks use me freely, so slight is my cost,
But because of me thousands are sometimes lost.

Occasionally you may seek me long,
And I'm sometimes right and sometimes wrong;
You may possibly make me when wiser grown;
But, oh, make a good one, or let me alone!
E. C. D.

PRIZE BOOK HUNT.

To the reader sending in the best list of books answering No. 91 will be given one of the books named—editor's selection. The solutions are to be forwarded within one week, and in case of doubt the winner will be decided by any feature adding merit to one of the nearest complete lists.

ANSWERS.

73—To do a big business on the square.

74—Pooh, hoop.

75—The correct division of the land would be: John, 180 acres; Thomas, 120. The payment of $1,000 was correctly apportioned.

76—Aye do; ado; adieu.

77—Mark Twain.

78—Lamentable.

79—1. Paint, pint. 2. Belittled, bed. 3. Rumored, rud. 4. Bethany, bey. 5. Baking, bag. 6. Landing, ling. 7. Blessed, bed. 8. Unthanked, unked. 9. Skin-deep, seep. Deleted words—"A little more than kin, and less than kind."

80—Hat-red.

James Whitcomb Riley.

Why, yes, I've read John Milton,
En' William Shakspeare, too;
En' ez fer this yer Tenn'son,
I know him through en' through.
But gi' me Whitcomb Riley,
The King o' poet men!
Why, I believe that man 'ud write
About a speckled hen.
He takes the simples' subjec's,
En' tells about 'em so
'At when you read his po'try
You kinder want ter go
An' put yer han' in his'n,
An' look into his eyes,
An' see where all them feelin's
'At's in his poems rise.
You've read his Armazindy?
Er that 'bout Brandywine?
Er any o' them foolish things
He calls his "Nonsense Rhymes?"
Ye hain't!—wall, I ain't s'prised much.
Most knowed it f'um yer looks.
Ye ain't got none o' that sunshine
Ye gits f'um Riley's books.
Jes tek' my whole lib'erry,
But pass my Riley o'er,
Fer he's be'n my chief pleasure
Fer 'leven year 'en more.
I'd like ter thank our poet
Fer joys he's sent to me,
An' say, "God send a blessin'
On James Whitcomb Riley."

Evansville. —Erin T. McMichan.

Divorce and Remarriage.

Rev. Percy S. Grant, in Ainslee's Magazine.

Why should not separation be sufficient? If divorce must take place, why remarry? Because such post-nuptial monasticism is as unlikely to be successful as its ecclesiastical prototype. In these matters no one knows what a day may bring forth. The calm decision of a time of disenchantment might become an absurd impossibility when the enchanting personality appears. I have heard very excellent women maintain that all marriages ought to be second marriages. Apparently they believe that their sex can greatly profit by experience and are not likely to make the same mistake twice. If this is true, such chastened homes ought to be good homes.

Dowie's New Party.

New York Evening Post.

Alexander Dowie, who is all sorts of things in Zion, including a reincarnation of the prophet Elijah, has evolved a new idea from his undoubtedly fertile brain. Whether or not he has found that there is not much in the Elijah business, or whether he is merely tired of it, deponent sayeth not, but at any rate Dowie is now going to form a new political party. It is to be known as the Theocratic party, and it is going to extend distances beyond Zion, though, of course, Zion is its home, and thus far Dowie is its most distinguished adherent. Dowie is always eloquent when he gets a chance to talk about the future. The Theocratic party has a great destiny, he declares. It is to be a world power. He particularly mentions Chicago and Africa as points needing its special attention. It is recalled that the last time Dowie and his people attempted to reform Chicago they got as far as Evanston, where they made so much disturbance that the fire department of the town was called out and the Zionists retreated after a good ducking.

HE KNEW.

Tommy (aged seven)—Say, Pop, What's a green grocer?

His Papa—One who'll let you have stuff on credit.

SOUTHERN BATTLE FLAGS.

Plea from an Old Soldier that They Be Sent Back.

Waverly (Ia.) Independent.

The survivors of the Thirty-fifth Mississippi Regiment, of the late Southern Confederacy, have asked that their regimental battle flag captured from them at the battle of Allatoona Pass, Georgia, on Oct. 5, 1864, be returned to them.

Allatoona Pass was the greatest little battle of the nineteenth century. Less than 2,000 Union men guarded two million rations and 8,000 cattle for Sherman's army. The rebel army was on its raid in Sherman's rear. French's division of the Confederate army surrounded the Allatoona garrison. Under a flag of true French sent a message to General Corse, the commander of the union forces, saying he would give the garrison just five minutes to surrender "in order to save the unnecessary effusion of human blood."

Corse replied that he would not surrender, but that he would be ready for that "unnecessary effusion" as soon as his assailant choose to begin it. Then followed the fiercest charges and bloodiest carnage of that war. After eight hours of the most desperate musketry and artillery duel on record, the rebels gave up.

French's army lost more killed, wounded and prisoners than were engaged on the Union side when the fight commenced, and he left eighty guns.

The union force lost 713 men, but Allatoona, with its rations and cattle, was saved for Sherman's army. It was a bloody day.

But if all the old Union boys who were there that day feel as the writer does that battle flag, which is a relic in the possession of the survivors of the Fourth Minnesota, will be turned over to the survivors of the Thirty-fifth Mississippi, without an opposing voice. If returning that old flag will afford the least comfort to those old Mississippians, we say, for God's sake let them have it. If returning the old battle flags to the organizations which carried them will help to wipe out the asperities engendered by that war, by all means let them be returned. The question as to which side was right is no longer under discussion, and never will be again. So let us only remember the glories of the struggle as it illustrated the heroism and superb qualities of Americans.

A Disappointed Woman.

Philadelphia Times.

It was in the register of wills' office.

"I want to see the will of Mrs. Henry Jones," said the woman who had just come in.

"Yes, madam; when did she die?" politely asked the clerk.

"Oh, she isn't dead," answered the woman in a matter-of-fact tone, "but I hear she has made her will, and I should like to see it, if you please."

"But the will is not here if she is not dead," said the surprised clerk.

"Why, isn't this the place where wills are kept for public inspection?"

"Yes, madam, but not until after the testator is deceased."

"Oh," said the woman, as she turned away with a disappointed expression, "then I can't find out whom she left her diamonds to, after all. How annoying!"

The clerk dropped into a chair just as she closed the door.